DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 300 911 EA 020 477

AUTHOR Bartell, Carol A.
TITLE A National Perspective: Teacher Incentives and Educational Reform Measures. Policy Perspectives on Teacher Incentive Planning.
SPONS AGENCY North Central Regional Educational Lab., Elmhurst, IL.
PUB DATE Apr 88
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 5-9, 1988).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Compensation (Remuneration); Elementary Secondary Education; *Incentives; Merit Pay; *Motivation Techniques; Recognition (Achievement); Teacher Education Programs; *Teacher Effectiveness; Teacher Employment Benefits; Teacher Morale; *Teacher Motivation; *Teacher Student Relationship

ABSTRACT

Many recent reports have predicted an impending crisis in the teaching profession. At the heart of the reports and the reform effort lies the notion that in order to improve school experience for children, school experiences for teachers ought to be improved. This paper deals with teacher incentives as a means of attracting, retaining, and motivating a quality teaching force. First, the concept of incentive is defined, followed by an outline of the present need for incentives in the teaching profession. Third, existing incentive plans have revealed four main outcomes: (1) the attraction of competent and talented individuals to the teaching profession; (2) the retention of superior teachers; (3) the improvement of teacher performance; and (4) the enhancement of teaching as a profession. Although plans differ in intent, design, and implementation, key general incentives of the various plans tend to be monetary compensation, professional status, recognition for achievements, increased responsibility, and conditions of the workplace. Appended is a conceptual framework for the examination of teacher incentive plans and 20 references. (SI)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

ED300911

# POLICY PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHER INCENTIVE PLANNING

## A National Perspective: Teacher Incentives and Educational Reform Measures

Carol A. Bartell

University of the Pacific, Stockton, California

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

C. Bartell

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

This work was funded by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, supportored in part by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Laboratory or the funding agency, and no official endoresement should be inferred.

Presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, April 5, 1988.

EA 020477

A National Perspective: Teacher Incentives and Educational Reform Measures

What role will teacher incentives play in the reform of education? The call for incentives has come from a host of national reports and has resulted in the consideration and adoption of a variety of plans across the nation. At the heart of the reports and the reform efforts lies the notion that in order to improve school experiences for children, school experiences for teachers ought to be improved. In order to attract, retain and motivate a quality teaching force, teaching as a profession must made more attractive, respected, and rewarding.

Defining Incentives

An incentive is that which induces, motivates and encourages participation or performance. It implies an external influence that would offer something desired in order to produce a certain behavior (Bartell, 1987). Incentive planning, therefore, requires that consideration be given to what it is that motivates teacher behavior. What is it that induces, motivates and encourages persons to select teaching as a career, remain contributing members of the profession, and continue to grow, develop and improve their skills?

Incentives as inducements to behavior are highly subjective and value-related. What serves as a motivator for one person or group of persons does not always become an incentive that would motivate another; if one does not value something, the possible receipt of it can hardly be a motivator. Incentives can be strongly or weakly valued or fall somewhere along a continuum. Incentives may complement or compete with one another. If one has

many reasons for acting a certain way and few reasons to exhibit opposing behavior, that person is most likely to behave in a manner which satisfies the dominant motivational factors.

The need for incentives

Many recent reports have predicted an impending crisis in the teaching profession (Darling-Hammond, 1984; Holmes Group, 1986; Schlechty & Vance, 1983; Task Force on Teaching as a Profession, 1986). These reports express concerns about the quantity and quality of candidates seeking to teach and about the morale and performance of the current workforce.

Fewer academically able students are selecting education as their academic majors (Darling-Hammond, 1984) and the most talented among them are the ones most likely to leave the profession (Lyson & Falk, 1984; Pavalko, 1970; Tierney & Bond, 1985), often within the first five years of their careers (Pederson, 1970; Schlechty & Vance, 1983).

Other problems associated with the impending teacher shortage relate to the unprecedented number of teachers who are nearing retirement age. The average age of American teachers is now about forty-two and it is predicted that in the next five years, up to forty percent of the current teaching force will retire or leave the profession (Hanes & Mitchell, 1985; NEA, 1983).

Predictions based on statistics gathered by the National Center for Education Statistics indicate that by 1992, if present trends continue, there will be 283,000 fewer teachers than there are positions available (Plisko, 1984). Some districts already report shortages in certain curricula areas, such as physics, computer science, bilingual education, and special education.

Some would contend that these needs can be partially met with former teachers who will reenter the profession once positions become available. It

is difficult to estimate how many former teachers who were unable to find work or who were subject to reductions in force during times of oversupply and declining enrollments will actually return to teach. The majority will not, according to a survey of former teachers (Harris & Associates, 1985).

The old incentives are increasingly ineffective, especially for women and minorities who now have many more career options than they have had in the past (Schlecty & Vance, 1983). In addition, only 70 percent of those who are trained to be teachers actually do teach (Cresap, McCormick and Paget, 1984).

Many teachers report that they would not select teaching as a career again, nor would they encourage others to do so. Almost half of all teachers in an NEA survey claimed that if they had it to do over again, they would not enter the profession (NEA, 1983); this represented a five-fold increase over a twenty-year period. A similar percentage would be reluctant to advise their own children (Gallup, 1984) or any other young person (Harris, 1985) to become a teacher.

According to evidence presented by Sykes (1983), public school teaching has lost more occupational prestige in the past fifteen to twenty years than any other occupation ranked in the the polls. Half of all teachers themselves feel that students, parents, and the society at large no longer respect them (Harris, 1985).

The conditions under which teachers work more often serve as a disincentive rather than an incentive to remain in the classroom. These conditions have been described as follows:

> ...Teaching is honored and disdained, praised as 'dedicated service', lampooned as 'easy work'...Teaching from its inception in America has occupied a special but shadowed social standing...Real regard shown for those who taught has never matched professed regard (Boyer, 1983, p.154)

> ...The surroundings in which many teachers work, especially in our large urban schools, would turn any other work place into a

> shambles...Recruiting for the profession is hampered by the average rate of pay, which is often less than that in other taxing lines of work...we also fail in this country to give (teachers) the respect that the worth of their service to the community deserves...Add to this all the many administrative, public relations, and quasi-menial duties that take mind and energy away from teaching, it is easy to understand why our educational system is not able to attract many of the ablest young into the teaching profession (Adler, 1982, pp. 57-58).
>
> ...Elementary and secondary school teachers are expected to act like professionals, but they are not treated like professionals. As a general rule, they are not involved in meaningful discussions and decisions on matter that directly affect their classroom work, such as curriculum, textbooks, instruction, and grading (ASCD Task Force, 1985, p.12).
>
> ...the problems of teacher education mirror society's failure to treat teaching as a profession. If the rewards, career patterns, working conditions, and professional responsibilities of teachers indicate a second-class occupation, then candidates for teaching and teacher education will tend to follow those expectations (Holmes Group, 1986, p.61).

## The Intent of Incentives

Quantity concerns and quality concerns are of equal importance in addressing incentive planning. Teachers must be recruited in sufficient numbers to fill existing needs. Yet those teachers, in order to provide the best education available for the children in the schools of our nation, must be those that are well-trained, competent, and most able to motivate and encourage educational growth and achievement.

In order to remedy the problems of the teaching profession described above, a number of incentive plans have been suggested to make the profession more attractive and rewarding. When designing such plans, it is important to decide what behavior one wants to promote or the outcome one wishes to produce in response to the offering of the incentive. What is the intent of the plan? A thorough review of the

intent of existing incentive plans (Bartell, 1987) revealed the following intended outcomes:

- .the attraction of competent and talented individuals to the teaching profession
- .the retention of superior teachers
- .the improvement of teacher performance
- .the enhancement of teaching as a profession

It may be helpful to think of the intent of incentives as hierarchically arranged. Attraction is the first step, after which the focus is on retention of the best candidates. The efforts then need to be on continued improvement with the final step being enhancement of the individual's role and contribution to the profession. Different incentives will appeal at different stages. Enhancement of teaching as a profession is the ultimate goal of all incentive plans. If more, talented persons are attracted to teaching, if those persons remain committed to the profession and are given opportunities to grow and expand within their roles as teachers, then indeed, the profession will be enhanced.

Teacher motivators

Current incentive plans assume that teachers want the following things out of their profession:

- .they want to be compensated adequately
- .they want to achieve a certain level of professional status
- .they want to be recognized for their achievements
- .they want to assume gradually increasing levels of responsibilities
- .they want the conditions under which they work to support their performance

Such incentive plans must also be viewed in terms of the needs of schools and of society. Community needs dictate that incentives must be provided to attract competent individuals who are trained in appropriate areas. A workforce must be provided to work in all geographic locations and in a variety of settings. These individuals should demonstrate a willingness to grow professionally and to assume increasing levels of responsibilities as they prepare students for an increasingly complex society.

Incentive planning, therefore, involves finding ways to provide what is desired by those who teach or would teach with the resources available and within the existing constraints to meet existing demands of society.

## Types of Incentive Plans

A wide variety of incentive plans can be found across the nation and in this particular region (represented by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory). Plans differ in intent and in what is conceived as the teacher motivators listed above. Some general categories of plans are reviewed here; however, even within categories, plans differ in their design and implementation.

The first category of plans revolves around monetary compensation. Teacher salaries can be adjusted to make entry and longevity in the profession more attractive. The range and choice of collateral benefits may improve. Market-sensitive pay has been suggested as a way to attract teachers into critical shortage areas or to specific locations. Bonuses can be provided to reward outstanding teacher performance or for other purposes. Grants, sabbaticals, and pay for additional training could be a monetary incentive, although there are other incentives involved here. Another modification in the traditional pay scale is the design of differing salaries based on job

factors, or a "comparable worth" scheme. Pay for superior performance, or merit pay is another plan that has been tried.

The second type of plan attempts to change professional status in some way. It offers opportunities for teachers to advance within the teaching profession. Career ladders, or career development plans offer this opportunity. The most competent teachers are selected to move up to a new status or level and assume different or additional responsibilities. Additional responsibilities may include such things as working with beginning teachers, conducting staff in-service activities, developing curriculum, acting as a peer evaluator, becoming a grade level or content area supervisor, or any number of tasks. Other plans to raise status can be directed toward raising the status of all teachers by giving them more visibility, more input into decision-making, and recognizing their achievements.

The third type of plan focuses directly on the awards and recognition described above (which may also change the status of teaching). Recognition programs include teacher of the week/month/year sorts of programs, awards and recognition for special achievement, favorable press coverage, grant awards for instructional improvements, one-time bonuses for effective performance, teacher- appreciation dinners, and verbal recognition of teacher accomplishments.

A fourth type of plan addresses professional responsibilities that may serve to motivate teachers. Mentor or master teacher plans would fall into this category. Here teachers are given the opportunity to assume a new role and share their own knowledge and experience. These opportunities may or may not carry increased remuneration and they do not necessarily change a teacher's status. Other expanded responsibilities include special projects developed and implemented by teachers themselves, summer employment

opportunities within or outside of the teaching profession, or attendance and participation in professional meetings. Ongoing opportunities for real professional growth and development are important.

Perhaps the most comprehensive type of plan is the fifth area to be addressed, the conditions of the workplace. Teachers need a supportive environment, including support from peers, supervisors, administrators, parents, and school board members. They need to have a role in decision-making. They want to be represented on committees and commissions, including those at the state level. Class size and course loads need to be addressed. Appropriate and sufficient instructional materials and supplies should be provided. Discipline problems need to be addressed. Non-instructional duties should be reduced. Work space and preparation assistance should be provided.

Incentive planning, then, involves giving attention to a wide range of motivators that attract, retain, and encourage teacher participation and performance.

Incentives, then, should be designed to match the motivator with the intent of the plan. A matrix is presented in Figure 1 which presents a framework for the examination of the interaction of teacher motivators and intent of incentives.

The intent of incentives is based on what concerns need to be addressed. If, for example, a particular school district began to experience a shortage of qualified applicants for teaching positions, attraction would be the immediate phase of concern. If it is believed that monetary compensation is a strong motivator for those entering the teaching profession, and the intent was to recruit outstanding candidates, one would offer the highest beginning salary that was possible, provide a bonus amount for signing an early

contract, or pay the first month apartment rent for the new teacher. If one chose to believe that professional responsibilities were the strongest motivator, the emphasis in recruitment would be different. The recruiter would then focus on the nature of the job itself and the opportunities available for professional advancement or diversity. The most comprehensive approach to recruiting new teachers would be to plan to address all possible motivators that could stimulate teachers to enter, remain, and continue to develop and grow within the profession.

As was stated earlier, usually more than one motivator is considered in the building of incentive plans. The framework as presented does not mean to suggest that any given plan will address only one cell of the matrix. In fact, it is more realistic consider that a wide range of motivators will predict and influence teacher behavior. The framework should not be used to fit a specific plan into an individual cell. It can be used to examine instead how each cell is addressed in a proposed incentive plan.

The most comprehensive plans will address as many cells as possible, including various factors that are felt to motivate teachers and serving a wide range of purposes or intentions. Reform will not occur if the plan is narrowly conceived and adopted. Piecemeal approaches to incentives will only provide temporary solutions and will not, in the long run, enhance the profession.

| | INTENT | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | attraction | retention | improvement | enhancement |
| MOTIVATOR | | | | |
| monetary compensation | | | | |
| career status | | | | |
| awards and recognition | | | | |
| professional responsibilities | | | | |
| conditions of the workplace | | | | |

Figure 1. A Conceptual Framework for the Examination of Teacher Incentive Plans

REFERENCES

Adler, M. (1982). The Paidia proposal: An educational manifesto. New York: MacMillan Publishing Co.

ASCD Task Force on Merit Pay and Career Ladders. (1985). Incentives for excellence in America's Schools. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Bartell, C.A. (1987). Incentives that enhance the teaching profession: Background Paper. Elmhurst, Illinois: North Central Regional Educational Laboratory.

Boyer, E.L. (1983). High school: A report on secondary education in America. New York: Harper and Row.

Cresap, McCormick and Paget. (1984). Teacher incentives: A tool for effective management. Reston, Virginia: National Association of Elementary School Principals, American Association of School Administrators, National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1984). Beyond the commission reports: The coming crisis in teaching. Santa Monica, California: The Rand Corporation.

Gallup, G.H. (1984). The 16th annual Gallup poll of the public's attitude toward the public schools. Phi Delta Kappan, 66(1), 23-38.

Hanes, R.C. & Mitchell, K.F. (1985). Teacher career development in Charlotte-Mecklenberg. Educational Leadership, 43(3), 11-13.

Harris, L. & Associates. (1985). The Metropolitan Life survey of the American teacher. New York: Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.

Holmes Group. (1986). Tomorrow's teachers: A report of the Holmes Group. East Lansing, Michigan: Holmes Group Inc.

Lyson, T.A. & Falk, W.W. (1984). Recruitment to schoolteaching: The relationship between high school plans and early adult attainments. American Educational Research Journal, 21, 181-193.

The National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Education.

The National Education Association. (1983). Nationwide Opinion Poll. Washington, D.C.: The National Education Association.

Pavalko, R.M. (1970). Recruitment to teaching: Patterns of selection and retention. Sociology of Education, 43, 340-353.

Pederson, K.G. (1970). Teacher migration and attrition. Administrator's Notebook, 18, 1-13.

Plisko, V.W. (Ed.). (1984). The conditions of education. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics.

Schlecty, P. & Vance, V. (1983). Recruitment, selection, and retention: The shape of the teaching force. Elementary School Journal, 83, 469-487.

Sykes, G. (1983). Contradictions, ironies, and promises unfulfilled: A contemporary account of the status of teaching. Phi Delta Kappan, 87-93.

Task Force on Teaching as a Profession. (1986). A nation prepared: Teachers for the twenty-first century. New York: Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy.

Tierney, D.S. & Bond, L. (1985) Policymaking in the dark. Teacher Education Quarterly, 12(4), 7-12.